

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, December 12, 2003

JUST IN TIME FOR HOLIDAY PATROLS, THE MPDC SWEARS IN 17 NEW OFFICERS

The oath of office was administered to the 17 newest members of the MPDC during graduation ceremonies Friday at the US Mint Police Headquarters in Northwest DC. All of the new officers are being detailed to enhanced holiday visibility patrols over the next three weeks, as part of the Department's increased foot and bicycle patrols in commercial areas throughout the District. After that, the new officers will be assigned to neighborhood patrols in various Police Service Areas (PSAs) across the city. The new officers include 16 experienced law enforcement professionals hired from other police agencies under the MPDC's "lateral transfer" program, as well as one recruit officer. The lateral-hire program allows the MPDC to boost both the number of officers and experience levels by tapping into officers who have previous experience. Some of Friday's graduates include officers from the Philadelphia, Seattle and Memphis Police Departments, as well as the US Marine Corps Military Police, US Capitol Police and the DC Housing Authority Police, among others. They completed a condensed 13-week training program at the MPDC's Maurice T. Turner Jr., Institute of Police Science. New recruits, by contrast, spend approximately 24 weeks in the training academy.

- ① For more information on the MPDC's lateral-hire program, go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/polateral.shtml>

AGGRESSIVE SPEEDING REACHES RECORD LOW IN NOVEMBER

Fewer people were speeding aggressively in DC's photo radar enforcement zones in November than during any other month since the automated speeding reduction program was first implemented in the summer of 2001. Last month, just under 6 percent of the more than 950,000 vehicles monitored by photo radar were found to be traveling above the speed limit threshold established for the program. That is substantially lower than the 31 percent aggressive speeding rate during July 2001, when the program first started. The previous low percentage for aggressive speeding was 6.8 percent in September 2003. Average speeds on residential streets, arteries and highways all continue to be substantially lower than they were when the program began 28 months ago. On streets with a 25-mph speed limit, the average speed of all vehicles detected by photo radar was just 26.8 mph in November 2003—down from 35.5 mph in July 2001 and the lowest average speed in residential areas since the program began. During the first 28 months of the program, more than 533,000 photo radar speeding citations have been paid, resulting in nearly \$39.8 million in fines.

- ① Get the latest results on the Photo Radar Speeding Reduction Program at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speedresults_text.shtml
- ① For more information about photo radar, including the locations of photo radar enforcement zones, click on:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speed.shtml>
- ① DC's 4-year-old red-light camera program also continues to produce impressive results, including a 63 percent reduction in red-light running violations at intersections equipped with cameras. Details at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/redlight.shtml>

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICER HONORED AS DEPARTMENT-WIDE “OFFICER OF THE MONTH”

When PSA 106 Officer Aisha Hackley observed a vehicle occupied by three juveniles make an illegal turn, she attempted to conduct a traffic stop. Appearing nervous, the driver and occupants stopped the vehicle, exited and fled on foot, with Officer Hackley in pursuit. Following a foot pursuit, two of the three subjects were apprehended, with the assistance of a couple jogging in the area. Officer Hackley placed the subjects under arrest and charged them with Unauthorized Use of a Vehicle. During a post-arrest interview, both subjects indicated that they frequently stole cars to ride around the streets of DC—a serious problem in many neighborhoods. Officer Hackley’s keen observation and decision to investigate the suspicious activity resulted in the apprehension of two juvenile offenders. For her actions, she has been honored as the MPDC’s Department-wide “Officer of the Month” for December during the recent CHAMPS awards ceremony. Officer Hackley was one of 22 MPDC members who were honored for their heroic and outstanding actions.

WATCH OUT FOR CHARITY SCAMS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

The holiday season is traditionally a time of giving, with many charities seeking contributions to help the less fortunate. But it’s also a time when some con artists try to take advantage of others’ generosity by going door-to-door for “charitable donations”—when there’s no charity involved. If someone shows up at your door asking for donations, always ask for identification. It’s also a good idea to request printed information about the charity, or a phone number or website that you can contact for more information. Also, find out how the funds will be used. Be especially wary of people who ask for cash only or for children soliciting funds who are not accompanied by an adult. If you are not satisfied with the answers you get, don’t give. As an alternative, help a charitable organization you know and like instead.

NEWS & NOTES

Chatting with the Chief. Chief Ramsey discusses public safety issues with host Stephanie Gaines-Bryant and takes phone calls during the “Chatting with the Chief” program on WHUR 96.5-FM radio, on Tuesday, December 16, from 6:40-7 pm. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/media/media.shtm>.

Holiday SoberRide. Again this holiday season, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program is sponsoring SoberRide, an anti-drunk driving program that provides free cab rides home for individuals who have had too much to drink. From December 12 through January 1, individuals may call 1-800-200-TAXI (#TAXI on AT&T Wireless) to request a free cab ride home, up to \$50. Details at <http://www.soberride.com>.

Viewing of Recovered Stolen Property. On Saturday, December 20, from 10 am to 2 pm, detectives assigned to the Second Police District will hold a viewing of recovered stolen property taken in burglaries in Northwest between April and June of 2003. The event will take place at 2D headquarters, 3320 Idaho Avenue, NW. Individuals should bring police report numbers and an itemized list of property that was stolen. For details, contact Detective Neil Jones at (202) 282-0043 or via email at njones@mpdc.org.

Youth Adopt a Nursing Home. On Tuesday, December 16, members of the ROC-Central Youth Advisory Council will “adopt a nursing home” in Northwest DC, as part of its ongoing efforts to help the community. Details at <http://www.mpdc.org/blue/news.asp?sid=2461>.

Holiday Events for Children. Beginning this weekend, several police districts will be holding holiday events for children in their communities. To find out more, contact your local police district or visit the district calendar on the MPDC website <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/districts.shtm>.

- ① Read all of their stories at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/heroes/champs/2003/12.shtm>
- ① CHAMPS stands for Capital Hotels Award Metropolitan Police, a recognition program sponsored by the Hotel Association of Washington, DC. This month’s ceremony was hosted by the Hotel Washington in Northwest, DC.

- ① Charity scams are just one type of crime that can happen during the holidays. For a complete list of winter holiday safety tips for shoppers, travelers and when you’re at home, visit: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/season/winter.shtm>

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 12/12/03)

- 2003: 232
- 2002: 247
- % Change: -6.1%

Adult Arrests (week end. 12/6/03)

- Total: 703
- Drugs: 138
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 25
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 33

Firearm Recoveries (as of 12/9/03)

- Total: 1,862
- December: 61

Traffic Fatalities (as of 12/12/03)

- 2003: 61
- 2002: 49
- % Change: +24.5%